



COMPANY OF MASTER MARINERS Sydney Meeting

Dear Colleagues,

The Company of Master Mariners are holding their next luncheon meeting on Thursday 15 February 2024 at 1200 for 1230, expecting to conclude by 1430.

Our guest Speaker is Captain John Cardelli, assisted by Captain Peter Hay who will provide us with a presentation on the Australian Reef Pilots operation in PNG and surrounding waters.

The Australian Reef Pilots have worked in a very competitive environment since 1993 when the Federal Government deregulated the Qld Licensing system for a competitive pilotage framework administered at a Federal Level by AMSA. In The Hydrographers Passage there were 3 Pilotage companies offering their services to the shipping industry: Australian Reef Pilots (ARP), Torres Pilots (TP) and Hydro Pilots. All Pilot transfers from the outer Reef PBG at Blossom Bank were performed by land-on fly-off helicopters operated from Mackay airport, by all 3 companies. The cost of a single Pilot transfer via Helicopter was calculated to be well over \$6,000 and increasing.

Operating a Pilot Mothership some 100 nautical miles off shore was not really a viable option, so other options were looked into by ARP. Transferring Pilots ship to ship further north from Hydrographers Passage was looked into. This would lead to an arrangement where the outgoing ARP Pilots would stay onboard the ships to the sheltered PNG waters, then transfer via a Mother Pilot Ship to southbound ships heading back to Hydrographers Passage and inwards.

This presentation will tell the story of setting up Mother Pilots ships in PNG, anchored in sheltered lagoons, manned by PNG Crew, and operating 2 or 3 Pilot Launches for the Pilot landings and boardings.

As this operation expanded agreements were established for the training of PNG marine crews, and even the issue of PNG Coastal Pilot Licences to the ARP Pilots. As the business grew the base moved from Pilot Mother Ships to a shore based private resort in the Conflict Islands. When ship demand was high pilots were flown in and out of Australia using chartered planes mostly via Port Moresby. This presented risks which included the crash of a charter jet with one ARP Pilot onboard who died.

Captain Christopher Hart was a Sydney resident and family man, who was also a member of the Sydney Branch of The COMMA.

Please come along and join your friends and shipmates for a social lunch while learning about this important and interesting organisation.

Details:

Date: 12:00 for 12:30 AEDT Thursday, 15 February 2024.

Venue: Occidental Hotel, 43 York Street, Sydney NSW 2000 (Glenmore Room)

RSVP by Tuesday, February 13. Email bradleyJ@Ymail.com or text to 0415 600 519.

Cost: \$50pp on arrival.